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SLA

THE WEEK

HEARST, PATRICIA

■ A florilegium of Voices of Moderation on Patricia Hearst's kidnapping: 1) Shana Alexander, writing in *Newsweek*, blamed the SLA's violence less on radical ideology or black militance than on America's repression of women: "When women struggle to liberate themselves what is liberated first is sometimes female rage. . . . Enraged at the world, awash in free-floating empathy for the downtrodden, such people step out the door each day with an empty leash, looking for underdogs." (Nice image.) 2) Timothy Leary's letter to *Newsweek* two issues later: "Ms. Alexander seems to be the only journalist able to look at events with detachment, see all the points of view, and describe the interaction of insanities with patient and saving humor. I have recently been in positions very similar to those she describes—including being kidnapped-arrested, brainwashed (?) [sic] and put on parole by Eldridge Cleaver in Algeria, escaping, etc. It's a good time to be a woman . . ." (Does he want a transplant?) 3) Janet Cooper, identified by the *New York Post* as "a West Coast radical activist": "The Nixon Administration would like nothing better than for us to believe these are the kind of things revolutionaries and community activists do." (Well, it's *one* kind of thing.) 4) The National Caucus of Labor Committee: "There is no doubt that the SLA is a CIA front" (and Patricia is a double agent).